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Statement by the Council of European Dentists

Waste management and sustainability in dentistry

The Council of European Dentists (CED) is committed to raising awareness of sustainability among dental product manufacturers and the profession. This applies in particular to sustainable waste management.

Waste disposal and sustainability in dentistry were the main topics at the spring conference of the CED in Athens at the end of May. The delegates unanimously adopted a statement on the subject. They pledged to raise awareness of sustainability, especially among manufacturers of dental products and the dental profession.

The statement also emphasises that sustainable waste management, as already practised in many EU member states, is a necessity for the dental sector. Dental practices and manufacturers can thus reduce their ecological footprint and contribute to a healthier future for all. By working together, the environment will be protected and, at the same time, patients throughout the EU can be offered high-quality dental care.

Education is needed

The statement reads: "If we work together, we can improve oral and consequently overall health to reduce the amount of curative treatments and lower the pollution caused by medicine residues and travel movements. By increasing the public knowledge about good oral health-care, we can prevent a lot of treatments and reduce the use of dental materials. All materials that we do not have to use are helping us to reduce waste."

The CED believes that manufacturers play a vital role in promoting sustainable waste management in dentistry. Manufacturers must focus on developing eco-friendly and recyclable dental products. Dental practices who wish to do so can

seek and obtain environmental certifications that demonstrate their commitment to responsible waste management and sustainability. The CED also proposed that EU funding and national subsidies supporting dental practices should be encouraged.

However, such strategies should not introduce any significant financial and administrative burdens on dental practices, as small and micro enterprises will not be able to cope with too many rules and restrictions. Excessive bureaucracy is the wrong approach and must be avoided.

Source: Office for European Affairs of the German Dental Association



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